INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES

SIXTH GENERAL BODY MEETING
June, 2nd 1993

Reports from
the President, General Secretary and the Treasurer
July 1991 - May 1993

Statement of President : General Body Meeting June 2, 1993

It is a great moment for me to be here with you on the occasion of the IAWS General Body Meeting, coinciding with the Sixth National Conference of the Association. In the twelve years since the Bombay Conference, we have all growth together. Our membership has registered an impressive increase, details of which will be presented by the Secretary and the Treasurer.

I will make only a very brief statement. It has been the constant endeavour of our Executive Committee, that the IAWS should build a lobby of women's opinion on critical issues facing Indian Society. We felt that the Association should be in the centre of the women's studies movement and should provide legitimacy to a formation based on gender. We felt that a dialogue with mainstream Social Sciences should be initiated and sustained.

The choice of theme for this Conference has been an apt one from this point of view. The Association has brought out a publication of background papers on the same subject, in collaboration with many institutions and individuals. We want not only to consolidate and strengthen, but to provide space for convergence of facts, opinions and action.

The main activity of the Association has been the holding of the biennial conferences at national level. During the tenure of the last EC, as well as ours, there have been certain movements, some opinion building and action, towards regionalising IAWS activities. There has been talk of forming regional Associations, of holding regional Conferences to highlight local issues and perceptions which could also feed into National meetings. There is already a Maharashtra Association of Women's Studies. We need to clarify many issues, such as the relationship between the regional and the National Association of Women's Studies. Some spade work has been done already on this topic by the present Executive Committee.

During this EC tenure, we have been approached by two foreign institutions for collaboration. One was a proposal from the Association of Women in Development, USA (AWID) for holding of a Conference on the New Economic Policies and Women. We had to turn down this request for lack of time and other reasons. The other was a proposal from the Institute of Social Studies, Hague for IAWS - ISS collaboration

in theory building and methodology training. This is still under our consideration.

Our two year tenures as Executive Committee has been a happy, if somewhat strenuous one. We held eight EC meetings and brought out 4 issues of the Newsletter. Two volume of selected previous Conference papers have been published by Vikas. Two more are to be brought our shortly.

As members are aware, IAWS has no permanent office establishment. We have a system of a floating secretariat, which moves along with the office bearers. Our EC has found this to be a very enervating method of management. It has taken us all of 18 months to set the house in some order. I think the time has come for IAWS to consider this situation in the light of new demands being made on us, our own pace of growth and to take decision in the matter.

I would like to place on record my deep appreciation of the co-operation extended to me by my colleagues, and of the hard work put in by all, especially the Vice President, General Secretary Treasurer, Editor and Joint Secretary. A special word of appreciation for the Local Organizing Secretary for her enthusiastic response to the challenge of mounting this Conference. As you know, Maithreyi Krishnaraj's absence from India created the vacuum which I was called upon to fill. I must say, I miss her very much and want to record my sense of gratitude and appreciation for her leadership.

I would not be truthful if I did not acknowledge the energetic support given by the staff of Institute of Social Studies Trust at New Delhi for the Secretarial work of IAWS. I want to thank each one of them, especially as both the Joint Secretary and I made far too many demands on their time and practice.

I must also record my deep sense of appreciation to Dr. Madaiah, the Vice-Chancellor of Mysore University and Dr. Seshadri, the Principal of the Regional College of Education, Mysore for giving us their unstinted co-operation in making the Conference a success. Thank you.

Devaki Jain
President.

Report of the General Secretary, June 1993

The Indian Association of Women's Studies has completed twelve years. Twelve is an important number for measuring time - as the bamboo plant knows and those wearing non-digital watches can confirm - or those who are conscious of the 12 month year or the 12 signs of the Zodiac. Twelve years is a different kind of time-marker than a decade: it is part of a cosmic time schedule. I am using that factor to permit myself some leeway in presenting the 12th year report that departs a little from the conventional format.

Our first task was to elect the office bearers and send out their names and addresses to all the members. This was done, and as you all know, Maithreyi Krishnaraj was elected President of the IAWS. The other office bearers have continued in their posts. Maithreyi got a prestigious appointment on the faculty of the Institute of Social Studies at the Hague from Sept. 1992 onwards. When she found that it was difficult to manage heading the Association long distance, she sent in her resignation as president in Dec. 1992 while continuing to be a member. At our next EC meeting in January 1993, we elected Devaki Jain as President.

The EC members hail from different parts of the country, as befits a nationwide organization. The EC membership is from the following places: Bangalore, Baroda, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Guntur, Kausani, Madras and Mysore in India and The Hague in the Netherlands. Long-distance communication, with the expensiveness and inadequacies of the postal and telephone systems, has been slow. In addition, end 1992 and the beginning of 1993 have seen our secular democracy take a real beating at the hands of communalism and terrorism. Being part of the same living organism called India - our efforts at Association management were also affected in various ways. Most of the ensuing problems were overcome, however, through working together with purpose and a strong sense of solidarity.

From the earliest meeting of the EC in 1991, we made a decision to go beyond merely keeping the IAWS machine well oiled. The main task of each Committee has been to organize a biennial Conference and this takes centre stage of the agenda. We decided to give it all the attention it required, while also identifying other objectives of the Association that would be consonant with this major function.

After a great deal of discussion, the members of the EC arrived at a consensus on the following points.

1. The IAWS should serve as a clearing house for the emerging classification systems, definitions and theoretical constructs in gender studies.

2. Members of this IAWS should function as a resource pool of professional services for women's groups and grass roots organizations, helping where required, with documentation, development of project proposals, appraisal and evaluation.

3. The President of the IAWS should be an ex-officio member of the panels in Women's Studies in the UGC, ICSSR, DST, ICAR and other similar bodies.

4. For the IAWS, collaborating with similar organizations and sharing at agendas and time tables would be fruitful, resulting in the production of divergent ideas on alternative models for development and social justice.

5. The IAWS should have a central role in debating on national issues like the Panchayati Raj and Structural Adjustment Policy. There should be a convergence of facts, opinions and actions. Instead of getting marginalised as "Women's Studies" - pertaining only to women's concerns, our gender perspective should influence mainstream disciplines like Economics and Sociology.

Out of our own Panchshila - (agreement on these five points) was born the theme for the Sixth National Conference. The decision that the gender perspective must enter the mainstream disciplines was thus central to all our discourses at the EC meetings. It was felt that the implications of the New Economic Policy especially on women in poverty groups needed to be examined carefully. Opinion building and action by the women's movement to safeguard women's interests and to promote their advancement was a major objective. It was felt the IAWS could provide a forum for a serious discourse on methods to ensure state Commitment to women's employment, health, education, social security and the alleviation of poverty. Eight sub-themes were identified and co-ordinators requested to spell out the framework for debate and discussion. The Conference announcement brochure, which contained these as well as procedural details and Membership and Registration forms, was posted to every member, as well as to Vice - Chancellors, Principals of Women's Colleges, Heads of Research Organizations, Heads of Voluntary Organizations, enlightened bureaucrats and other friends of IAWS.

The thrust of the meetings that followed, once the theme was fixed, concerned a) the mechanisms of organizing the Conference, b) review of theoretical perspectives and c) a broad sweep of aspects of women's studies that could be linked to the New Economic Policy.

Originally we planned that there should be two or three regional meetings on the same theme in the first year, followed by a National Conference in the next. The Maharashtra Association of Women's of Women's Studies, that was newly constituted, held a three day meeting at Gargoti, Kolhapur in Nov. 1992. On the third day, the New Economic Policy was the main theme discussed by the academics, activists and grass roots women who attended the meeting. The IAWS gave the new group some financial support for the meetings.

Since the New Economic Policy was already being discussed elsewhere in seminars, workshops and conferences, a decision was made to compile some of the papers and print a pre-conference volume for IAWS members. A large chunk of the material came from a Round Table held by the Institute of Social Studies Trust, with UNDP support. The publication unit of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences was entrusted with the task of printing the volume. Since we had already received funding for our pre-conference activities, it was decided to make the copy available to all members and Conference participants free of cost.

Identifying the Co-ordinators of the sub-themes, organizing meetings with them and deliberating upon the format and structure most appropriate for each sub-theme took all our attention for several months. All the members of the EC were unanimous that the Conference was not just to be a paper reading exercise. It was to be an effort to see the linkings and the overlaps of different aspects that touched our life, through the new policy of liberalisation and privatisation, which in turn put our vulnerable groups on the razor's edge of competition. These attitudes on our part were communicated to sub-theme co-ordinators and must have influenced the selection and acceptance of papers. It is hoped that a serious effort of this kind will yield its crop of focussed papers and a good publication. We also made an ecology friendly decision not to type and duplicate papers in full, but to print only abstracts of accepted papers.

Talking of publication - the IAWS has been able to bring out only two of the ten publications mentioned in the Secretary's Report of 1991. Others are in the pipeline. Some have been dropped entirely as the editors have got involved in other studies, other commitments. Once a certain delay occurs - papers tend to become outdated and editors tend to lose interest. And there are always other hawk-eyed people ready to take advantage of our tardiness.

Thus 1992 was also the year of Plagiarism. For the first time IAWS was confronted with the fact of Conference papers being passed off in an edited volume, without any permission being sought or obtained. This

sent us racing to the Copyright Act and to our friendly lawyer's office. Protesting to the publisher and ascertaining our legal rights in such matters were part of the excitement of being on the EC.

And once were had found the right person to advise us on legal matters, we decided to get the IAWS Rules and Regulations (as our Constitution is referred to) examined for discrepancies. We also needed to revise the membership fees and rules pertaining to associate members. This effort has resulted in the proposed amendments that we have mailed to all the members and which will be discussed and finalised at this meeting. A drafting committee has gone through each and every word and I trust that our membership will exercise its franchise in the cause of the larger good of the IAWS.

December 1992 gave a shock to the body politic with further threats of divisiveness, hatred and rabid cultism. Some of the investigative reportage on the violence in different parts of the country, studied by IAWS members, show how families protected their friends and neighbours rather than give in to the political pressures of communalism. In this again, women were more forgiving, less vindictive, bringing to our attention the need for women's collective action in crises. The sub-themes of this Conference reflect our commitment to some of these contemporary issues.

The strengthening of cultural ties with countries in the region has proceeded gradually in the last few years. The IAWS would like to take the initiative to go beyond national boundaries and to include our colleagues from the SAARC countries in our common concerns for gender equity, for conservation and enrichment of natural resources and for peace in the region.

Those global objectives are yet to develop a sharp focus, but there is no doubt that unless women act collectively for the future, the man-made part of the world will soon run down. We may not have to wait for the predicted cosmic collision in the year 2116. We may well have worked ourselves out of existence before then.

To communicate some of these ideas, we have used the IAWS Newsletter. We had four newsletters in this two year period. Here again, we would have liked to have more frequent and regular issues but the question again is of time. There is no full time IAWS functionary. each of us squeezes time out for Association work.

Membership lists have been updated after a marathon effort. The reason for lists being incomplete may be as follows. Since we tend to function informally - we persuade friends to join IAWS, make new members who pay in their fees and we forget to write down their names and addresses. Or so it seems to us when we constantly answer letters from members,

including life members that they have not received any communication from us. The present EC members have tried to make reparations, where possible. We have now sorted out the membership list according to category and according to the State in which members are situated and fed these into a computer.

However, we find that our Computer is not smart enough to spell Tiruchirapalli or Hoshangabad correctly. For a final check out on spellings, we need the co-operation of all members. What I would like to suggest is that each person present here writes out her full name and address - right to the pin code - on the sheets of paper that are circulated. We have come upon novel spelling of people's names and place names that sound impossible and we realised that they were the result of hasty scrawls and careless recording. Even the Telephone Department is able to produce a reasonable Directory. The IAWS should have a clear, correct and updated membership list.

So that the narrative of this report could be maintained, without being interspersed with statistics, I have put in all the vital statistics in a Fact Sheet at the end.

The Election process for the fifth election is being started. Dr. Kameshwari Jandhyala, now Director of Mahila Samatha in Andhra Pradesh, has agreed to be the Returning Officer for the forthcoming election. It is hoped that every member will participate with enthusiasm in the task of getting the next Executive Committee elected.

I would like to end this report with expressing our gratitude to all the institutions and individuals who have given IAWS their whole hearted support through funds, access to information and expertise in many fields. The Local Organizing Secretary of this Conference who has worked with energy and attention to every detail to enable us all to have a good Conference, deserves our deep gratitude and felicitation.

The members of the EC have worked together with a good feeling of co-operation and friendship. I would not mention any single person by name, but just say that we have all been enriched and strengthened by the experience of our joint stewardship of the IAWS, and hope that we have served our term satisfactorily.

S. Anandalakshmy
General Secretary

FACT SHEET

Current Membership Number

Members	209
Life Members	400
Student Members	53
Institutional Members	28
Corporate Members	12
Associate Members	18

Election Deadlines

Last date membership for eligibility to vote	April 30, 1993
Last date for returning nomination forms to the Returning Officer	Aug. 1, 1993
Last date for withdrawal/confirmation by candidates	Sept. 8, 1993
Last date for completed ballot papers to reach the Returning Officer	Oct. 8, 1993

Publications

1. Sujata Gothoskar (Ed), Struggles of Women at Work, Vikas, 1992
2. Susheela Kaushik (Ed.), Participation of Women in Politics, Vikas 1993
3. IAWS, The New Economic Policy and Women, TISS, 1993

Treasurer's Report: July 1991 – May 1993

Accounts for the year 1991-1992 and 1992-1993 were audited. Copies of the audited statments of Accounts are enclosed.

It may be pointed out it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Association to function professionally, as the Association has neither a permanent office, nor any paid staff to do the administrative work, files are shifted from one place to the other as the office bearers change. It is therefore, absolutely essentially to procure a grant for administrative expenses so that some paid staff can be maintained for the IAWS to function in an effective and sustained manner.

Financial resources for the Association during the years 1991-92 and 1992-93, consisted of Membership fee, Royalty from the Publications, Interest and Dividend from the FDR and U.T.I. But all this income amounted only to a sum of Rs.78,092.86 and Rs.2,71,121.60 for the two financial years.

A request was made to the Dept. of Women and Child Development for a recurring organisational grant. This request may be renewed by the next Executive Committee.

The National Commission of Women may also be requested to provide some organisational assistance on a sustained basis.

However, a Ford Foundation grant for $50,000/- for five years had been sanctioned. Out of this Rs.5,39,836.82 has been received and used for preparatory meetings and related expenses towards the 6th National Conference. The Pre-Conference publication and the several planning meetings have been supported by this fund.

Conference Funding

All donors of the IAWS and the Sixth National conference are gratefully acknowledged here:

The Department of Women and Child Development, Govt. India have granted Rs.50,000/- towards the expenses of this Conferenece.

The National Commission of Women has sanctioned Rs.10,000/- for the Conference.

The Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India has agreed to let us utilise the remaining Rs.40,981.50 granted for the 5th National Conference, for the participation of SAARC delegates to the 6th National Conference.

The All India Catholic Association for Higher Education (AICHE) has also provided Rs.35,000/- towards the Conference expenses.

The major expenses of this Conference are being met by a very

generous grant of Rs.9 lakhs approximately, from the Royal Netherlands Embassy, which the IAWS most gratefully acknowledges.

NORAD is providing assistance of Rs.1 lakh for travel costs of special invitees.

The Treasurer's Report is placed before the General Body for information and approval.

Zarina Bhatty
Trasurer

Indian Association for

Income and Expenditure Account

EXPENDITURE	AMOUNT
To Publication Expenses	33,012.00
To Travelling Expenses	1,05,199.00
To Printing & Stationery	10,663.70
To IVth National Conference Exp.	30,714.00
To Honararium A/c	3,050.00
To Postage Expenses	1,111.10
To Audit Fees	1,500.00
To Professional & Legal Charges	5,000.00
To Conveyance	1,066.00
To Boarding & Lodging, Meals	1,475.85
To Bank Charges/Commission	148.00
To Advertisement Expenses	360.00
To Salaries	–
To Misc. Expenses	–
To Amount written off as per Annexure 'A'	–
To Short & Excess A/c	412.55
To Depreciation	112.00
To Excess of Income over Expenditure	2,22,234.21
	4,18,058.41

PRESIDENT
Sd/-

GEN. SECRETARY
Sd/-

Women's Studies, New Delhi

for the year ending 31st March 1992

INCOME	AMOUNT
By Grant Received	3,73,520.50
By Membership Fees Received	6,865.00
By Receipts from sale of Publication	2,690.00
By Royalties	19,331.91
By Interest on S.B. Account	8,986.00
By Dividend U.T.I.	6,195.00
By Misc. Income	470.00
	4,18,058.41

AUDITOR'S REPORT

TREASURER
Sd/-

In Terms of our Report of even date annexed.
For R.P. Munjal & Company
Chartered Accountants

Sd/-

(R.P.Munjal)
Proprietor

Indian Association for

Balance Sheet

LIABILITIES	AMOUNT
LIFE MEMBERSHIP	
Balance as per last year	81,000.00
Addition during the year	2,500.00
CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP	
Balance as per last year	30,000.00
Publication Fund	27,302.81
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	
Balance as per last year	55,992.86
Excess of Income over Exp.	2,22,234.21
Membership fee	1,54,646.60
ADVANCE RECEIVED FROM	
Ministry of External Affairs	40,981.50
SUNDRY CREDITORS	
(As per Annexure 'A')	16,988.97
	4,92,446.95

PRESIDENT
Sd/-

GEN. SECRETARY
Sd/-

PLACE: NEW DELHI

Women's Studies, New Delhi

for the year ending 31st March 1992 .

ASSETS		AMOUNT
FURNITURE & FIXTURE		
Balance as per last year	1,124.00	
Less : Dep. during the year	112.00	1,012.00
Interest Accrued on Fixed Deposit		4,363.00
ADVANCE FOR PUBLICATION EXPENSES		
(As per Annexure 'A')		54,166.20
Amount Receivable from Min. of Education		7,500.00
Amount Receivable from D.S.T.		3,055.25
Amount Receivable from I.C.S.S.R.		2,630.00
Unit Trust of India (Units)		37,240.00
Security Deposists		500.00
Fixed Deposit Receipts		58,602.00
T.D.S.		2,170.00
Cash in hand		2,013.07
New Bank of India		10,000.00
State Bank of India S.B. A/c		3,09,195.43
		4,92,446.95

AUDITOR'S REPORT

TREASURER
Sd/-

In Terms of our Report of even date annexed.
For R.P. Munjal & Company
Chartered Accountants

Sd/-

(R.P.Munjal)
Proprietor